

2011 Message From the Program Chair



Welcome to Toronto and the 45th Annual Convention of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies! We are thrilled to have the Convention in Canada for the first time in several years. Toronto is a vibrant and diverse city with many excellent cultural, dining, and sightseeing opportunities to take advantage of in between meeting activities.

ABCT is a growing organization, with approximately 5,000 members (including 300 in Canada). The Convention has steadily expanded over the years and has taken on an international flavor. This year we received over 1,800 submissions from the U.S. and 19 other countries. To accommodate this growth, for the first time, events are scheduled in two hotels: the Sheraton Centre Toronto and Toronto Hilton. Each hotel has state-of-the-art facilities. The walk between them takes a brief 4 minutes and may be done underground in inclement weather in about 10 minutes.

This year's theme is Dissemination for the 21st Century. Dissemination was last a focus of the Convention in 2001. We return to that theme after a decade that has brought advances in theory and research on models of dissemination, innovative technological approaches to treatment delivery, new ways of assessing dissemination outcomes, and novel methods of disseminating proven interventions through education and training. These themes are reflected in many of the excellent presentations at this year's Convention.

Other highlights of the meeting include Debra Hope's Presidential Address exploring the complex interplay of learning, culture, and hormones in anxiety. Our four invited addresses represent a range of interesting topics. Thomas Bradbury will address the state of relationship science and how to improve preventive and educational interventions for couples. Zindel Segal will discuss how the field can use accumulated data on mindfulness-based interventions to identify mediating mechanisms and sharpen our understanding of how these treatments work. Consistent with this year's theme, Bonnie Spring will discuss new frontiers in Evidence-Based Practice, including the development of treatment guidelines and current thinking about how to promote the adoption of evidence-based practices. Finally, it is a long-standing tradition that ABCT's previous year's Lifetime Achievement Award winner presents an invited address. Due to the unexpected passing of G. Alan Marlatt, it was decided to pay tribute to different aspects of his research by having his talk presented by four colleagues (Drs. Donovan, Witkiewitz, Larmier, and Bowen) who worked closely with him. Linda Sobell, a close colleague of Alan's and past ABCT President, will moderate this special panel honoring Alan's life and research. The four presentations are intended to be a tribute to Alan's legacy as a luminary and pioneer in the addictions field.

In addition to the tried and true presentations we have come to expect, this year brings the introduction of a new presentation format: Spotlight Research Presentations. These 60-minute sessions allow researchers to debut especially innovative or groundbreaking findings and offer a more in-depth research presentation than is permitted by symposia or other formats. We had a large response to the call for these submissions. Topics covered this year include transdiagnostic CBT for anxiety (Peter Norton), emotional regulation therapy for complex anxiety and depression (David Fresco), telephone-supported CBT for depression (Mark Lau), and an adapted CBT program for post-partum depression (Robert Ammerman). For those interested in career development, there is the long-standing internship site overview. Joining the internship presentation as an ongoing special event is a panel on getting into graduate school aimed at undergraduates, a growing group within the organization.

As you peruse the many excellent offerings at this year's meeting I would like to draw your attention to an important but subtle new feature of the program booklet. The schedule grids for each day of the Convention now include page numbers listed parenthetically under each event. This feature will allow you to more quickly locate detailed information about events listed in the grids (this is available only in the print version).

A successful Convention is the product of many people's hard work. Members of the Convention and Education Issues Committee, chaired by Sandra Pimentel, assembled an excellent slate of Workshops (Jillian Shipherd), Master Clinician Seminars (Kevin Chapman), and AMASS presentations (Scott Compton). Institutes were coordinated by John Otis, last year's Program Chair, who was helpful to me in assuming that role. I would like to offer special thanks to Mary Ellen Brown at ABCT who works tirelessly behind the scenes to make the Convention happen this and every year. She and Christina Porter at Scholar One provided me with invaluable guidance throughout the process. I would also like to thank Assistant Program Chairs Rosy Maldonado and Laura Watkins who worked many hours scheduling sessions, responding to inquiries, and handling numerous details to keep things running smoothly and on schedule. They did a terrific job! I also appreciate the many members of the Program Committee who each reviewed a large number of submissions. Finally, I would like to thank Deb Hope for entrusting me with the privilege of serving ABCT as this year's Program Chair. It is always a pleasure to work with Deb!

Best wishes for a stimulating and productive Convention!

DAVID DILLO